

enclosed for the Office's convenience. Further, a copy of the date-stamped filing receipt is enclosed herewith to demonstrate the timely filing of these documents.

Even if, *in arguendo*, applicants failed to comply with the requirements of a properly filed Sequence Listing, the Office has not provided guidance to the Applicants regarding what the Applicants must provide. More specifically, there is nothing marked below the section titled "Applicant Must Provide", within the enclosed Notice dated December 3, 2002.

Therefore the Notice is esoteric, at best, in requesting more information from the Applicants. Therefore, if the Notice is proper, Applicants respectfully request the Office to issue a new Notice that properly provides guidance to Applicants regarding what, in fact, the Office wishes Applicants to provide the Office. At the present, Applicants believe that all requirements regarding the filing of the Sequence Listing and the computer-readable Sequence Listing have been fulfilled. Applicants attempted to contact the Examiner on December 30, 2002, to clarify this matter. However, the attempt was unsuccessful.

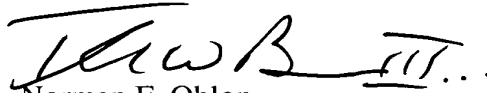
In addition, the Notice apparently indicates that the Preliminary Amendment filed January 16, 2002, is not in compliance with the current format because a "clean version of a replacement paragraph" has not been filed. Applicants respectfully disagree. At all instances where Sequence Identifiers are inserted, a new paragraph begins on the next line (indicated by the indentation/tab in the specification). Further, as demonstrated by the enclosed copy of the Preliminary Amendment, both clean and marked-up copies of the paragraphs in the specification that were amended are, indeed, provided to the Office. Without further guidance from the Office, Applicants can not determine what, exactly, the Office wishes the Applicants to further provide. Indeed, the Preliminary Amendment is proper, and therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Preliminary Amendment to be entered.

Applicants submit that this application is in condition for examination on the merits.

Early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. F. Oblon".

Norman F. Oblon
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 24,618

Thomas W. Barnes III, Ph.D.
Registration No. *P*-52,595



22850

(703) 413-3000
Fax #: (703)413-2220
NFO/TWB/twb:aps
I:\atty\Twb\205907US-pr.wpd